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THE NECESSITY OF NATIONAL REFORMATION

STATED IN

A SERMON,

PREACHED

ON OCCASION OF THE LATE PUBLIC FAST,

MARCH 13. 1800.

BY

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1800.



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A SERMON, &c.

JOEL i. 14,—20.

SANCTIFY YE A FAST, CALL A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY,
GATHER THE ELDERS AND ALL THE INHABITANTS
OF THE LAND INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD YOUR
GOD, AND CRY UNTO THE LORD, ALAS FOR THE
DAY: FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD IS AT HAND,
AND AS A DESTRUCTION FROM THE ALMIGHTY
SHALL IT COME. IS NOT THE MEAT CUT OFF
BEFORE OUR EYES, YEA, JOY AND GLADNESS FROM
THE HOUSE OF OUR GOD? THE SEED IS ROTTEN
UNDER THEIR CLOUDS, THE GARNERS ARE LAID
DESOLATE, THE BARNs ARE BROKEN DOWN; FOR
THE CORN IS WITHERED. HOW DO THE BEASTS
GROAN? THE HERDS OF CATTLE ARE PERPLEXED,
BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO PASTURE; YEA, THE
FLOCKS OF SHEEP ARE MADE DESOLATE. O LORD,
TO THEE WILL I CRY: FOR THE FIRE HATH DEVOUR-
ED THE PASTURES OF THE WILDERNESS, AND THE

—FLAME HATH BURNT ALL THE TREES OF THE FIELD,
 THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD CRY ALSO UNTO THEE !
 FOR THE RIVERS OF WATERS ARE DRIED UP, AND
 THE FIRE HATH DEVoured THE PASTURES OF THE
 WILDERNESS.

THESE words contain a very affecting description of the desolate condition of Judea, in consequence of a grievous famine. To what period of the Jewish history Joel refers, is uncertain; but never surely was calamity deplored in strains more pathetic. The prophet speaks of the rivers of water as dried up; of the trees of the field as withered; of the verdure of the earth as consumed; of the beasts as groaning for want, in deep perplexity, and crying to heaven for relief; and of the land itself as mourning.—Our country has not been delivered up to the horrors of famine; but abating this circumstance, and making allowance for the different climate of Palestine, this passage holds forth a true picture of our situation for a series of months. Such a season as the past, so backward and so ungenial, has scarcely been known. The fruits of the earth
 were



were far from attaining to maturity; the corn was wasted, and the meat cut off before our eyes, and even our cattle suffered through the inclemency of the elements, and the want of their accustomed pasture.—To these evils, a general sickliness has succeeded, the effects of which the land may yet have reason to mourn.—Besides, and here the parallel is exceeded, we are engaged in a war, which has not carried desolation to our fields and habitations, but which has proved fatal to not a few of our countrymen; which has presented us with many splendid trophies, but trophies not unstained by precious blood; which has extended our empire and our fame, but which threatens to bring myriads of immortal beings to an untimely grave.—To all these evils may be added, that spirit of insensibility under the divine chastisements, which, it is to be feared, has gone forth, than which a more severe judgment cannot be inflicted.

The Supreme Ruler of the world is righteous and beneficent. What then is the cause of these terrible calamities?—It is sin. This was the cause of the famine deplored by Joel, as appears from his

his calling the inhabitants of Judea to fasting, as a mean of deliverance.—The description which we have given of the cause of our calamities, is too general to affect our minds sufficiently,—and, in this discourse, I propose, through divine assistance,

I. To lay before you some of the prevailing sins, which have brought us into our present situation; and,

II. To consider the means by which our calamities may be removed.

I. Let us lay before you some of the prevailing sins, which have brought us into our present calamitous situation, and on account of which we are called this day to humble ourselves in the presence of God.—By prevailing sins, I do not mean sins unknown in former times; but vices, which, on account of their enormity and uncommon spread, may be considered as, in a certain degree, peculiar to the present age.

1. I begin with Ingratitude. Many proofs are not necessary to establish against us the charge of ingratitude. No nation ever experienced more of the kindness of heaven.—Our climate is desirable, being at once removed from the stifling heats of the tropical countries, and from the colds and tempests of the gloomy polar regions. Our minerals, and the other native productions of the island, have, from time immemorial, furnished the materials of the most useful manufactures, and, at the same time, of an extensive and profitable traffic. Our situation, in the midst of the seas, while it favours our independence, has, by the blessing of God on the industry of the inhabitants, rendered our country the emporium of commerce.—To speak of our form of government, happily distant from the rigours of despotism, and from democratical licence; or of our laws, founded in justice, and affording equal protection to the indigent and the wealthy; to you is unnecessary. You know well, and have been taught to appreciate their excellence.—Internal peace is a blessing which we have long enjoyed; and, even now, when the noise of the warrior is heard

heard in other countries, and when the fairest provinces of the earth are covered with mourning, neither war nor famine has reached our dwellings. Our crop has failed in a great measure, yet, blessed be God, we are not without the means of even a comfortable subsistence. The cries of the poor are loud and piercing, but they have not been heard with indifference.—Other countries have been distinguished by one, or by a few of these blessings, but what country has been distinguished by them all? Has our gratitude increased in proportion as our blessings have been multiplied? Let the state of our religion and manners bear witness.

Hitherto I have spoken of our external blessings, blessings confessedly of inferior importance, vapours which disappear, flowers which are soon rifled of their sweetness. Let me now lead your attention to the religious privileges, by which our country is eminently distinguished:—When I look to a map of the world, and behold countries populous and highly cultivated, without the truth as it is in Jesus,—without one drop from those salutary streams which make glad the city
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of our God, my heart is melted within me.—But what transports inspire my soul, when I cast my eyes upon one little and almost invisible spot, and behold the sources of life pouring themselves down, as if they would empty at once their inexhaustible stores; when, in the midst of the unbounded desolation, I behold scenes of delightful verdure, “the wilderness converted into a fruitful field, and the dry land into springs of water.”—But what time would be sufficient to enumerate the spiritual blessings of Britain? Let our early deliverance from the darkness of Popery, the establishment of our religious rights at the Revolution, the freedom which we still enjoy to worship our God, every man according to the dictates of his conscience, the diligence and fervour with which the pure doctrines of the cross are published by many, serve as a specimen.—What returns have we made to God for these mercies? Alas! In the land of uprightness, we have dealt unjustly, and would not behold the majesty of the Lord. The ox knoweth his owner, but we, more brutish and ungrateful, have forgotten the marvellous works of our God, or returned them with

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ingratitude

ingratitude and disaffection. O my country, the cry is great, and thy sin is very grievous. What land so eminent for its privileges, and what land so polluted by the crimes of the inhabitants? Our ingratitude will appear more fully, when we consider,

2. OUR Pride. Pride has often received the name of the universal passion, and is by no means peculiar to our country and times. Its connection, however, with our whole system of thinking and acting is so intimate, that we hesitate not to place it among the peculiar sins of the age. In what period, or in what country has it obtained a more extensive spread, or raged with greater virulence, and under such a multitude of unsuspected appearances? The decorum, or regard to station of the great, will often be found synonymous with a contempt of their brethren, whom the same beneficent Creator hath formed, and the same almighty Saviour hath redeemed. That restless and turbulent spirit which began to appear among persons of inferior station, what was it, in general, but pride, under the imposing name of public spirit?

rit? Is not patriotism often prostituted to serve the purposes of ambition, a species of pride which knows no bounds, and which spares no sacrifices of religion or of humanity, in order to attain its object? Such a patriotism, allow me to remark, has given rise to bloody revolutions, has buried cities in ruins, has laid waste the continent of Europe, and conveyed desolation to distant and pacific nations. Your men of science, under the name of philosophy, or the love of wisdom, conceal a pride of the severest kind, which heaps upon others the most opprobrious names, and will scarcely admit the humble follower of Jesus into the rank of humanity, because poor and unlearned. Thus has pride pervaded every order of men, and thus is it found under a thousand mild forms. For the truth of these remarks, I appeal to your own observation and experience.

Would to God, that pride were confined to the state; but, alas! its ravages have extended to the church likewise. I doubt not, that the pride of gifts has, in many instances, led to the unscriptural practice of lay-preaching, and to that unseemly violence which so lately threatened convulsion

to the church of God. Too much of an ostentatious spirit lies, it is to be feared, at the bottom of your long professions and public narratives of personal experiences. The best are at all times the most humble. Real excellence is seldom solicitous of public inspection. But while we deplore the errors of our fellow-Christians, God forbid that we should exculpate ourselves. Who can say, that he is a stranger to the workings of spiritual pride? The man who would dare to make this insinuation, is one of the proudest mortals whom the earth bears. By his own words, he is convicted and condemned.

3. INFIDELITY has of late been greatly increasing. I do not here speak of the infidelity of the heart, which often mingles with the purest exercises of religion, but of that public avowed scepticism, by which revelation in general is censured and rejected.—The gospel, which contains such eminent displays of infinite grace, and such endearing representations of eternal life through Jesus Christ, has been renounced by many, and its mysteries have

have been held forth as the dreams of enthusiasm, or as the impositions of artifice. Writings, replete with impiety, and subversive of every venerable institution, have been issued with a decisive and triumphant air, and, what is worse, have been read with eagerness. The lowest sarcasms have been received with approbation, and the grossest ribaldry admired as a solid refutation of those great truths on which our dearest hopes are founded. To dispute against Christianity, and to laugh at its sacred doctrines, are considered by not a few as the path to fame, and as the infallible symptoms of a superior mind. Happy the age when infidelity was confined to your wits and libertines in the higher ranks of society!—Now, alas! the contagion has gone downwards to the lower orders; and it is not uncommon to hear the meanest mechanic retailing the indecent remarks of the grosser infidels, with a freedom and vulgarity characteristic of his habits.

4. LUXURY and Licentiousness of Manners prevail to a most alarming degree. Look into the fashionable circles, or rather perhaps into the societies

societies of your more affluent citizens, and deplore the luxurious habits of the age. With what keenness does every one strive to exceed his neighbour in dress, in furniture, in the expence of his entertainments. Families are thus reduced to poverty; the labourer is defrauded of his hire; the food of the indigent is withheld; the young are inured to habits which embitter their future lives; premature infirmities are incurred; religion suffers; eternity is forgotten; yet men proceed in the same circle; posterity approve and imitate.

Was there ever a period, not excepting the licentious age of the second Charles, when profanity, intemperance, seduction, and other vices, against which the vengeance of Heaven is denounced, were so common? What ingenious arts do men now practice to get rid of time, that most precious possession! Do not plays, music, dancing, cards, dice, follow in such rapid succession, as to leave no interval to the serious business of life? Or if some vacant hours happen to intervene, are they not wasted in listless indolence, or devoted to the perusal of histories calculated to inflame the passions,

passions, to corrupt the heart, under the semblance of virtue to recommend vice; at a time, too, when the mind, softened by the tender story, is most susceptible of impressions. O degeneracy of times and manners!

But lewdness and intemperance are not confined to the more wealthy. They are to be found, though under forms somewhat different, among the lowest of the people. It were well if your tippling houses were places of social festivity only, but they are filled with gamesters, with drunkards, with the poorest and most profligate of mankind. Here, in these nurseries of vice, the unsuspecting are seduced, crimes against society are hatched, all kinds of violence and outrage are prepared, and hence issue those swarms of vagrants with which our streets are infested.

Our prosperity, it may be said, is the cause of all these disorders. Shall we dare to palliate our vices, by that which aggravates them in an inconceivable degree? Shall the kindness of Providence, intended to lead us to purity, be alledged as an apology for our wickedness? To what will the insolence of sinners not grow?—But God has visited

visited us with his judgments; yet luxury still prevails;—the corruption of our manners goes on;—pleasure is pursued as if the sole object of human existence; and “no man repenteth him
“ of his wickedness, saying, What have I done?”

5. THE present times are unhappily distinguished by the prevailing influence of a worldly spirit. The things of the world are necessary to our comfortable subsistence; and the desire of possessing them is not unlawful, if kept within due bounds, and influenced by proper motives. When, however, they are desired too eagerly, or pursued too keenly; when we devote to the acquisition of them an undue proportion of our affection and time; when we are unwilling to part with them for the purposes of Christian beneficence; then may we be charged with a worldly spirit. A narrow retentive disposition is none of the prevailing vices of the age. If there is among us a symptom of remaining religion, it is to be found in the large distributions to the indigent. But a passion to acquire money, to the neglect of our eternal concerns, is no less an evil, than a tenacious retention

tion of it when acquired : and this is perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of our commercial country. Does not money engross the thoughts of the greater part? Does it not excite a feverish tumult in the breast of the merchant, of the husbandman, of the mechanic, of almost every individual who engages in the transactions of the world? Does it not tear multitudes, I do not say from their country, but from the desire and from the means of religious improvement? Impelled by the irresistible passion, they explore with eagerness seas and continents; expose themselves without shrinking to the dangerous infection of pestilential shores, to the tornado of the tropics, and to the freezing colds of the higher latitudes; but God and eternity are shamefully neglected?—What melancholy scenes of dissimulation, falsehood, and perfidy, do our exchanges and places of public resort not exhibit? There riches are universally adored. Security against future want, a superior station in society, the depression of a formidable rival, are the pleasing ideas which crowd upon the earthly mind, and

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urge to the acquisition of wealth, whether by justice or injustice. Would to God, that men would leave their sordid passion behind them, in their houses, in their shops, in their places of commercial intercourse; but, alas! it attends them to the closet, to the church, and even to the altar of God, leaving no place nor time untainted. Often have good men lamented the influence of a worldly spirit. Often have the inhabitants of Britain been admonished of their danger, spite of all, this spirit prevails. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the earth. Of a truth, saith the Lord of hosts, many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair without inhabitant." —But while we lament the general evil, let us be careful to make a particular application to ourselves. The poorest labourer, who is not satisfied with the station assigned him in Providence, who, disregarding what he possesses, looks wistfully to the possessions of another, is no less guilty than the busy worldling, whose heart is wholly devoted to his gains.

6. To all these prevailing sins, we add that spirit of irreligion, which has been growing upon us for a series of years. This spirit appears particularly in the practice of profane swearing, in the omission of family duties, and in the neglect of divinely instituted ordinances.—Blasphemy prevails in our streets, and to such a degree, that it is scarcely possible to walk abroad, without being shocked by a multitude of profane oaths. Poor wretches are daily heard venting their fury against heaven, and imprecating on themselves and others that vengeance under which hell trembles. “Because of swearing the land mourns.”—In respect of family duties, we are criminally deficient. How few, comparatively, make conscience of their vows, and of training up their children in the fear of the Lord! Through the carelessness of parents, multitudes are as ignorant of the simplest truths of religion, as if educated in those desolate places of the earth where the name of Jesus was never heard.—Our ancestors, more pious than we, could redeem many a happy hour for the purposes of private devotion; but now a few moments cannot be spared from the more interesting concerns of

the body. Are there not many families in which the worship of God is a mere form, hurried through with indecent speed, or performed with impious indifference? Many families, in which even the form is thrown aside, except perhaps on extraordinary occasions, as on the evening of the Sabbath, or when labouring under severe indisposition? And many families more, in which the melody of praise is never heard?—How visible the growing contempt of public ordinances! Not to speak of many who attend the public services of religion because they have been accustomed to do so, and whose levity indicates sufficiently that their bodies only are present: Not to speak of those who, exceedingly partial in their attendance, deem a very small part of the Sabbath enough to be devoted to God, are there not multitudes who do not so much as think of the public institutions of religion, and who can live whole years without appearing in the congregation of the faithful?—Deplorable characteristic of the present age! “Surely we are
“a sinful people, and laden with iniquity.”

Behold then, in the ingratitude, pride, luxury, avarice, and irreligion of the times, the great
cause

cause of the calamities with which we are afflicted. These are not the spots of the children of God. They are crimes which cry loud for vengeance,—symptoms of more dreadful calamities approaching. Have we not reason to tremble before God? Have we not reason to fear, that our iniquities are now full, and that the time of visitation is at hand?

But is there no remedy left? Or is it too late to apply for relief?—No; we have no reason to despair. Our God is gracious and merciful, long-suffering and abundant in goodness.—While he warns us of our danger, he exhorts us to use the means of deliverance which his wisdom has provided.—To us, brethren, it was no pleasing office to dwell on the calamities and wickedness of the times; and, with sincere joy, we would now lead you,

II. To the means of deliverance; to the consideration of those important duties, without which there is neither safety nor hope.

I. WE must return to God in the exercise
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of faith. I place faith at the head of the other duties, to the performance of which I would now call you, because I consider faith as their great and leading principle. Without faith, without the believing apprehension of divine mercy, it is impossible to cherish one sentiment of penitential tenderness, to feel one emotion of sacred love, or to reform our conduct in any acceptable manner. By faith, I do not mean, a cold and general assent to the truth of the Christian revelation; but a firm belief, that there is no acceptance with God but through Jesus Christ, attended with such an application of the doctrines and promises of the gospel as produces, not only a sincere desire to be found in Christ, but a constant reliance upon his infinite merits for salvation, and a universal submission to his will. No review of our transgressions will lead us to Jesus Christ. This exercise, however, is well calculated to lead us out of ourselves, and, by the blessing of God, to impress our minds with the necessity of faith, in order to "repentance, and the remission of sins." While, therefore, we ponder our former transgressions, numerous as the dust of the ground, enormous

mous in respect of magnitude, and aggravated by many uncommon circumstances, let us endeavour to "believe in the Son of God, that we may be saved through faith in his name."—That God is willing to receive us, notwithstanding our many provocations, is evident from the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and from the whole course of Divine Providence.—For what end are the offers of mercy renewed from day to day? For what end are the most ungrateful, who have often converted the kindness of Heaven into an occasion of sin, invited into the divine presence? For what end is the arm of avenging Justice arrested, and are mercies heaped upon the guilty? For what end are calamities threatened, and judgments inflicted? For what end, but to convince men, that God "takes no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but rather that he would turn unto him and live?"—Dare we then refuse to comply with the intentions of our Supreme Benefactor in his word and in his providence, by refusing to take refuge in his mercy, and to hide ourselves under the shadow of his wings? Let us at least stir ourselves up to fervent supplication, and plead, that he would make known
his

his power, in the faith and conversion of men of every description. Our country, our families, our own welfare demand from us the immediate performance of this necessary and important duty.— If God, the all-merciful and Supreme Ruler, would have spared Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons only, what will he not do for the sake of a believing and penitent nation? Or if the greater part shall continue in sin, and thus bring down the vengeance which they have long merited, yet to those who believe there shall be deliverance, if not from present calamities, at least from “the evil to come.”

2. THE review of our sins ought to fill us with grief. Sin is an evil so enormous in itself, and so defiling to the soul, that it may well inspire the mind with grief and horror.—The misery to which sin exposes, is calculated to operate the same effect. Collect all the evils to which humanity is liable; bring forward every excruciating pang which imagination can figure; add to all, a duration which cannot be exhausted; and you will have some idea of the punishment due to sin. But
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to this misery, infatuated that we are, have we exposed ourselves.—Nobler motives, however, than the fear of punishment, call us to the exercise of godly sorrow; I mean the benefits of our unwearyed benefactor.—Not to speak of his kindness in our original formation, even in our fallen state his goodness is unbounded. It is for man that the sun continues to shed his genial enlivening beams, the varying seasons to unfold their beauties, and that the earth is adorned with grass, and herbs, and flowers, and corn. Even in the more terrible appearances of nature, in the thunder, in the tempest, in the earthquake, in the volcano, which all minister to the stability of our system, we discern the traces of divine benignity.—But there is an exhibition of kindness infinitely more attractive and overwhelming, the kindness of God in our redemption by Jesus Christ.—What fervid expression can describe sufficiently our misery by nature! To say of fallen man, that he is maimed, disfigured, sickly, ready to die, is to speak far below the truth. The Scriptures represent him as “without God, without Christ, dead in sins, “and subject to wrath.” But “in this God ma-

" manifested his love towards us, that he sent his only
 " begotten Son into the world that we might live
 " through him."—With what tenderness doth the
 Father of mercies solicit our acceptance of his
 bounty! Are not promises, exhortations, bene-
 fits, all employed to draw forth our love?—What
 hath God left undone for his vineyard? Spite of
 all, we continue to transgress, and " have turned
 " every one to his own way." Behold then what
 may rend our hearts, though hard as an adamant
 stone. Can we sustain the idea of rebellion against
 that tender parent, who has often guarded us from
 harm, and, times without number, loaded us with
 his bounty? Can we review our ingratitude to the
 God of our Lord Jesus Christ without blushing, and
 without having our souls dissolved into sorrow? Let
 us be concerned then to obtain the spirit of holy
 contrition, that we may mourn for our iniquities,
 every family apart, and every individual apart.
 It is in the general diffusion of this spirit, that we
 may hope to obtain deliverance from our present
 evils, and security against future calamities.

3. OUR faith and contrition must be accompa-
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nied with a universal reformation of our hearts and conduct. We have all resisted God; and, if we would retain whatever is precious to us, as men and as Christians, we must all unite in a cheerful obedience to his will.—This obedience must begin in the heart. It is vain to assume the appearances of piety, and to declaim against the corruptions of the times, if the corruptions of the heart are spared. Our public vices cannot be crushed but in their first principles of life, the irregular desires within us. Let us therefore “put off the old man,” and, as the apostle expresses it, “put on the new man,” “which after God is created in righteousness and “true holiness.” Here, however, is a capital error, into which we are in danger of falling. Persuaded by the evidence of the thing, and urged by the earnest exhortations of the Preacher of righteousness, we readily allow, that a thorough reformation is necessary; that our vices must be removed, and not restrained merely. We will even go the length of resolving to forsake our sins, and to cleave unto the Lord with all the heart.—But here we stop; and many hours have

not

not elapsed, when our resolutions are forgotten, and our desires have returned into their former channel. We perceive the good, and even approve its excellence, but, such is our inconsistency, we follow the evil, and will not abandon our former inclinations.

Our reformation, having commenced in a thorough change of the heart, must extend to the whole conversation. "We must turn every one of us from the evil which he has committed; we must keep the statutes of our God, and do that which is lawful and right." Indeed, this change in the life is the necessary consequence of internal purity. If the tree is made good, its fruits will be good likewise. I do not say, that the life of the Christian will be free from blame: the condition of frail humanity does not admit this idea. The Christian, however, delights in the law of the Lord, and will make it his study to have his life conformed to its precepts. Would to God I were delineating the character of every individual in Britain, or even of a considerable proportion of the inhabitants. We might then cherish the hope of a speedy

a speedy deliverance from our evils. The sword of the Lord would rest and be still: The seasons would become more genial, and the earth would bring forth in abundance.

Under God, much depends upon parents and masters of families, to realize our desires of general reformation. The importance of knowledge to the happiness of nations has been admitted by all wise and good men. But is it possible to convey knowledge in a manner so pleasing, or so effectual, as by the familiar instructions of those whom Providence has entrusted with the government of families? It is in the domestic circle that the heart glows with affection, that the strongest impressions are communicated, and that the mind acquires its earliest and most lasting habits. There it is that men are most frequently formed to the service of God; and to the inattention of parents may a considerable portion of our public depravity be traced. If the fields are neglected in the spring, it is in vain to look for the fruits of autumn: On the contrary, weeds of the most noxious kinds spring up and exhaust the soil. How criminal then, those governors of families who train up
 their

their children to every species of sinful indulgence, instead of labouring to frame their minds to the great principles of a religious life; who not only use no means to inspire their minds with horror at what is evil, but, by their loose conduct, convey to them the dismal inheritance of their follies and vices.

To you therefore, parents and guardians of youth, we look for aid in the necessary work of general reformation. Think often and seriously of your charge; and, urged by love to your children, to your country, to the church, and to your God, set yourselves immediately to the work of correcting the vices, and of forming the manners, of our dearest and tenderest hopes. You know your duty. You feel its importance. You must not take counsel with flesh and blood.—Would to God, that every man, in his own station, would not only reform himself and his household, but use all his influence with others, that the torrent of depravity may be stemmed, and a universal change in the public mind effected.—Without this our evils may be suspended, but cannot be removed.

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From this duty, let none plead exemption. The most obscure individual, who fears the Lord, may certainly contribute in some way or other to this great object. His religion, his patience, his prayers at least cannot be altogether in vain.

Let us then, my brethren, in the review of our sins, exercise faith in God, present to him the sacrifices of a broken spirit, and be concerned to mortify the whole body of sin.—But let us remember, that these are duties which far exceed the strength of fallen humanity; that the Spirit alone can enable us to perform them; that without his presence, reason, and scripture, and eloquence, and mercies, and judgments will be of no avail.—To unwearied diligence, let us add fervent supplication to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would have mercy upon us, and cause his Spirit to descend as a spirit of faith, of contrition, and of holiness. “ Briars
“ and thorns shall then no more cover the land
“ of my people. We shall bring forth the fruits
“ of repentance. Our Jerusalem shall be a quiet
“ habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be
“ broken

" broken down. God shall, after this, send us
 " corn, and wine, and oil, and we shall be satis-
 " fied therewith. The beasts of the field shall
 " be afraid no more, for the pastures of the wil-
 " derness shall spring. The tree shall bear her
 " fruit. The fig-tree and the vine shall yield
 " their strength. Our floors shall be full of wheat,
 " and our fats shall overflow with wine and oil,
 " and the years which the locust hath destroyed,
 " shall be restored. Then shall we eat in plenty,
 " and be satisfied, and praise the name of the
 " Lord." Amen.



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